**Novice All-Female Team from Middle East and Europe Depart for North Pole**

15 April 2018

* All-female EuroArabian Polar expedition comprising women from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Slovenia, Sweden, France, Cyprus, Russia and the UK.
* The expedition, which mostly includes first-time polar adventurers, will be led by veteran polar explorer Felicity Aston MBE

**The team will spend 10 days on the shifting pack ice of the Arctic Ocean attempting to ski roughly 100km over the treacherous terrain to reach the Geographic North Pole, the top of the world. If successful many of the women will be the first person from their country to ski the last degree to the Geographic North Pole.**

 ‘We want to send a strong and positive message about gender equality during and the need for greater cultural understanding,’ says expedition leader Felicity Aston MBE. ‘The world is facing global problems – such as climate change – that can only be tackled with global solutions. That requires everyone talking to each other more.’

In 2012 Aston became the first person in the world to ski across Antarctica alone and without the aid of kites, machines or dogs – a journey of 1744km that took her 59 days to complete.

The Euro-Arabian team will be sleeping in tents on the ice when they are not skiing, and will haul in sledges everything they need to survive in the Arctic. As well as the perils of temperatures as low as minus 40C, other hazards the team will face include movements of the pack ice that may split apart to reveal open water or push together to form walls of ice that have to be crossed. There is also the threat of predatory polar bears.

The team departed the remote Arctic archipelago of Svalbard in the early hours of 15th April. From where they flew to the floating ice station known as ‘Barneo’ and started their ski journey across the Arctic pack ice to the North Pole. Preparations for the expedition have been ongoing for nearly two years including training expeditions in Iceland and Oman.

The team will be conducting two important science experiments during the expedition and will be sharing their experiences live from the ice with schools and via social media. For updates please see the expedition website [www.euroarabianexpedition.com](http://www.euroarabianexpedition.com)

The expedition is sponsored by cybersecurity firm Kaspersky Lab, as well as Engie, Poseidon Expeditions, OmanTel and I Feel Slovenia

Notes for editors:

* Interviews with team members is possible after the expedition as well as live from the ice via satellite phone. Contact the expedition through northpolehomehelp@gmail.com to book a scheduled satellite phone call with the team.
* High resolution images are available
* About the expedition’s sponsors Kaspersky Lab:

Having sponsored two of Aston’s previous polar adventures – the Kaspersky Commonwealth Antarctic Expedition in 2009, and the Kaspersky ONE Transantarctic Expedition in 2011 – the cybersecurity company was keen to announce its support of her latest endeavour: the first ever all-women Euro-Arabian North Pole expedition.

Kaspersky Lab CEO Eugene Kaspersky – who will fly to the North Pole to meet and congratulate the women upon their arrival – said the company was proud to continue its support of inspiring female adventurers like Aston and her team.

*“For me, arctic adventuring isn’t just an exciting challenge, it’s a powerful motivation. People like Felicity and her team – determined and passionate – genuinely inspire me. They’re also role models for the younger generation – they help them to really go after what they want in life.”*

Kaspersky Lab is a global cybersecurity company celebrating its 20-year anniversary in 2017. Kaspersky Lab’s deep threat intelligence and security expertise is constantly transforming into security solutions and services to protect businesses, critical infrastructure, governments and consumers around the globe. The company’s comprehensive security portfolio includes leading endpoint protection and a number of specialized security solutions and services to fight sophisticated and evolving digital threats. Over 400 million users are protected by Kaspersky Lab technologies and we help 270,000 corporate clients protect what matters most to them. Learn more at [www.kaspersky.com](http://www.kaspersky.com).